

DR. HERRING OPENS DOOR TO NEW VOCATION FOR WOMEN

By Rene Bache

YEAR by year Uncle Sam is becoming more and more "choosy" about the children he adopts, and his latest move in controlling immigration is to create a woman's section of the bureau and place a woman at the head of it, Dr. Katherine Herring.

Dr. Herring, by profession a physician, has long been a student of social economics and for some time past she has done work in connection with the Immigration Service and the Children's Bureau. It is no small task that she must tackle, inasmuch as she will be called upon to direct the activities of a large number of women who are to be made full-fledged inspectors of immigration.

I found Dr. Herring in her office at the Department of Labor, and our talk began with a question that I asked regarding the new opening for women in the service, for up to the present time there has been a rather marked discrimination against the gentler sex in all the business connected with immigration. Even women stenographers were accepted with reluctance before the war.

"The expediency of the government is to give better recognition to women in the immigration service," said Dr. Herring. "It is realized that there are some things they can do better than men, and certain work they can do which men cannot do at all."

"Women are better qualified than men for handling problems involving the needs of women and children immigrants. It is proposed to utilize to best advantage their viewpoint. The intention is not to assign them to duties for which they are not especially fitted, or which involve undue hazard, as, for instance, in the boarding of ships. On the other hand, women inspectors can serve to advantage as special investigators, in connection with what is called the 'secondary inspection' of women and children aliens after they have landed, and as members of boards of special inquiry."

"Up to now the employment of women in the Immigration Service has been almost entirely restricted to the positions of matron and charwoman, though in occasional instances women inspectors have been appointed to look after school bonds in behalf of children, and to direct and investigate cases in which it was suspected women had been brought to this country for immoral purposes."

"How many women inspectors are there to be under the new dispensation?" I asked.

"That is not as yet determined. There are at present about 1800 men inspectors in the service, and I hope that eventually we shall have one woman for every eight men acting in that capacity. This does not mean, however, that men will be discharged to make room for women, but merely that vacancies as they occur will be filled by women inspectors."

"Any woman who is a citizen of the United States, not younger than twenty and not older than fifty-four years, is eligible from this time on as an inspector. The pay begins at \$1130 a year, and after six months' probation is often needed where hitherto a

spectors, the only requirement in their case being that they shall first pass an examination on the immigration law and its practical application. It is not expected, however, that there will be a sufficient number of available matrons to fill the places which almost immediately need to be filled.

"There are twenty matrons at Ellis Island, five in Philadelphia, five in Boston, three in New Orleans and twelve in San Francisco. The pay of a matron is only \$740 a year, without board or lodging. She is obliged to pay for her own meals at the immigration station where she is employed. It is required of her that she shall possess character, a fair education, refinement and common sense, and that she shall be 'kind but not sentimental.'"

THE matron is expected to exercise a womanly supervision over the women and children who arrive as strangers at an American seaport, helping in any personal way she can when called upon for service. She straightens out money problems and baggage problems, responds to emergency calls, gives comfort and advice, attends the bereaved with kindly sympathy, arranges for baths and other personal needs and sees that milk and crackers are regularly provided for little folks between meals.

"That is only a small part of it. The matron sees that telegrams are properly forwarded, and that arriving messages are delivered. She keeps a watch for callers who will furnish funds for the transportation of immigrants unable to proceed. She takes into custody insane or feeble-minded persons. She may be called upon to close up a home and sell the furniture. Aliens sent out of the country can't take their furniture back with them in the steerage, and so it must be sold, and the proceeds handed over to them. An incidental task of hers may be the closing of a bank account."

"The matron arranges for the shipment of baggage, and accompanies deported women and children to the ship on which they are to go back. She tries to expedite hearings for families with infants or small children, or for old people. She looks up affidavits, witnesses and the school bonds which often must be signed to guarantee that children shall be kept at school up to sixteen years of age. Often it happens that a woman is not met by the husband or affianced whom she expected to find awaiting her upon arrival, and in such a case she sees that steps are taken to locate the missing man."

"What then is left for women inspectors to do?" I ventured to inquire.

"Plenty of things," replied Dr. Herring. "For many years there has been great need of women inspectors at the immigration stations. Where women and children are concerned the woman's viewpoint is valuable and important. A certain measure of

immediately arises. How did she get into the country? Did she undergo the customary inspection before being admitted?—which means the payment of head tax, certification that she was free from disease and ascertainment of the fact that she had in her possession at least \$25 in money. She might get in without that much money, but it is required to know that she will be able to support herself, so that she is not likely to become a public charge. She may show that she has a job in prospect, or she may be admitted under bond, some responsible person guaranteeing her.

"But here is the case of a woman alien who has become a public charge, or worse. Her case must be looked up. She is summoned before an inspector and is required to tell how she got in. Her statement is then

and to make clear the fact that their passage was not paid by some employer of labor in this country, in contravention of the contract labor law.

"Part of the duties of the women inspectors will be to shut out immoral women. As might be supposed, it is not always easy to discriminate in such cases. A respectable woman may be brought to this country by a man under the pretense that she is his wife. In an instance of that kind, if the fraud is discovered, the man may be put in the penitentiary and the woman sent back to the place she came from, or both may be deported.

"If we deport a woman, sending her back to the country from which she came, it does not mean that she is deposited on the other side of the ocean as a mere derelict. We notify charitable organizations over there to look out for her on her arrival. Such organizations are scattered all over Europe,



shall have plenty of other administrative work to attend to."

Dr. Herring is a jolly woman, rapid of speech and full of an obvious and intense efficiency. I asked her to tell me something of her career, and she replied:

"I am a graduate of the George Washington University, and for two years I was a resident physician in women's hospitals in Philadelphia. In that capacity I had a big 'out' practice among aliens, largely Italians and Russian Jews."

FROM Philadelphia I went to Vineland, N. J., where, under the state board of charities and corrections, I had charge of 400 defective-delinquent girls. In a large percentage of instances the delinquency of girls is due to the fact that they are defective, and therefore unable properly to safeguard themselves. Out of the 400 there were a good many defective aliens. I made mental tests and devoted much time to looking up their family histories—mental deficiency being markedly heritable.

"I was in Vineland from 1912 to 1914, when I came to the Children's Bureau, and undertook in its behalf a study of infant mortality among the cotton-mill workers of Manchester, N. H. In the following year I made a study of feeble-mindedness and illegitimacy in Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, and Barnstable county, Massachusetts.

"In 1915, for the Immigration Service, I took two alien girls back to Helsinki, in Finnish Russia. One of them was feeble-minded and the other insane. My task was to deliver them safely into the hands of the authorities in that country."

"Next, for the Public Health Service, I made a study of pellagra among the cotton-mill workers of South Carolina. In 1917 I went back to the Immigration Service, and was appointed an inspector at Ellis Island. When we went into the war I came to the Department of Labor at Washington, to help Mr. Lawrence V. Powderly in the division of information, and I kept on at that work until appointed to my new job as head of the woman's section."

Flirting for Indigestion

IS FLIRTING justifiable? Quite a number of grave professors and physicians say it is, and even go so far as to recommend a mild indulgence for the cure of various ailments, mental and physical. Do they take their own medicine? That question they decline to answer on the ground of professional privilege.

"Flirting is a healthful and invigorating pastime," declared one prominent physician, who hastily added that he had all the patients he could attend to and did not wish his name mentioned. "I frequently recommend it as a tonic for dyspeptic and bilious people," he continued.

"It is quite simple," he explained. "When two young people commence a flirtation, they become animated and gay. Their hearts beat quicker, and the blood circulates more freely through the body. Thus the sluggish action of the liver is quickened by the increased blood supply. The entire system benefits. It is hardly possible to conceive of a person who is pleasantly and slightly excited, and with the mind absolutely free from all thought of ailments, not being benefited."

Could one ask for a more agreeable cure? Whether or not it costs anything is another matter, and those who indulge in this treatment should bear in mind that they are playing a game merely, or they may suffer from something worse than indigestion. Indulged in for mutual amusement, flirting can do little harm, and really improves the mind, the professors say.

"Flirting is one of the finest trainers and quickeners of the mind in existence," one authority declares. "It makes for social grace, balance and rapidity of thought. Both parties to a flirtation must play the game properly and convincingly, but at the same time each must realize that it is a game, or there will come heart-burnings. Those

who confine themselves to roguish glances, quick-witted raffles, light banter and repartee cannot come to much ill, and the exchange of exaggerated compliments only tends to sharpen the wits."

"I can't be quoted," a famous professor said when invited to express his views, "but I don't mind saying—if you do not mention my name—that my observation has been that flirtation, when not carried to too great lengths, is decidedly beneficial. There are few human ailments worse than 'the blues' or 'a grouch,' for they slow up and interfere with both mental and physical activities, with permanent and far-reaching harmful results. I don't know of anything that will cure 'blues' so quickly as a mild flirtation. Like any other good thing, flirtation should be moderately indulged in, of course."

"Justifiable? Certainly not! Perfectly inexcusable!" another professor declared firmly. "But," he added with a very human smile, "quite natural, I dare say, and—no—doubtless agreeable."

Maybe we'll have to revise our old-fashioned ideas as to the dangers of playing with hearts.

Wicked William

MR. CASEY had his youngest son "on the carpet," and, apprehensive of the result, William was calling upon heaven to witness that he was innocent of all wrongdoing, whereof his father was offering many instances.

"I know ye! I know ye!" said Mr. Casey, very cynically. "Ye young rascal, ye look innocent enough, I'll admit; but yer looks is deceavin'. Why, ye're that bold and brazen ye could stand there an' lie an' lie till ye was black in the face, without ever changin' color!"



DOCTOR KATHERINE HERRING

civic bodies under the general direction of the International Council of Women, and with them the Immigration Service cooperates."

"What care is taken of the women and children after they get here?"

"Ordinarily they are confined to the charge of the railroads. An inspector escorts them to the station and buys their tickets if they have not already got them. Each one wears a tag with the place of destination on it. They are shipped on an immigrant train—the railroads say they have to ship them in bunches. It is not luxurious travel for them. They pay first-class fare, but they do not get first-class treatment. Their train is liable to be shunted off upon a side track for hours at a time while all other trains pass them by."

"Immigrants are not allowed under any circumstances to travel in a parlor car, even though willing to pay for the privilege. Many immigrants now coming over brought combination steamship and railroad tickets as long ago as before the war. Since then our railroad rates have gone up; but the subject, after some controversy on the subject, have agreed not to charge the immigrants extra. Their tickets are good without additional fare."

THE problem of taking care of arriving women and children is vastly simplified by the fact that virtually all of them have destinations. They are going to relatives. All of the women seem to have jobs already obtained. The relatives have got the jobs for them before sending them money to come across the ocean. Mostly the jobs are in factories. Recently Mr. Wallace, the immigration commissioner in charge at Ellis Island, tried for three months to find an immigrant woman who would accept employment in his own household as maid-servant. He did not succeed; every young woman whose services he sought to obtain had a job in prospect already."

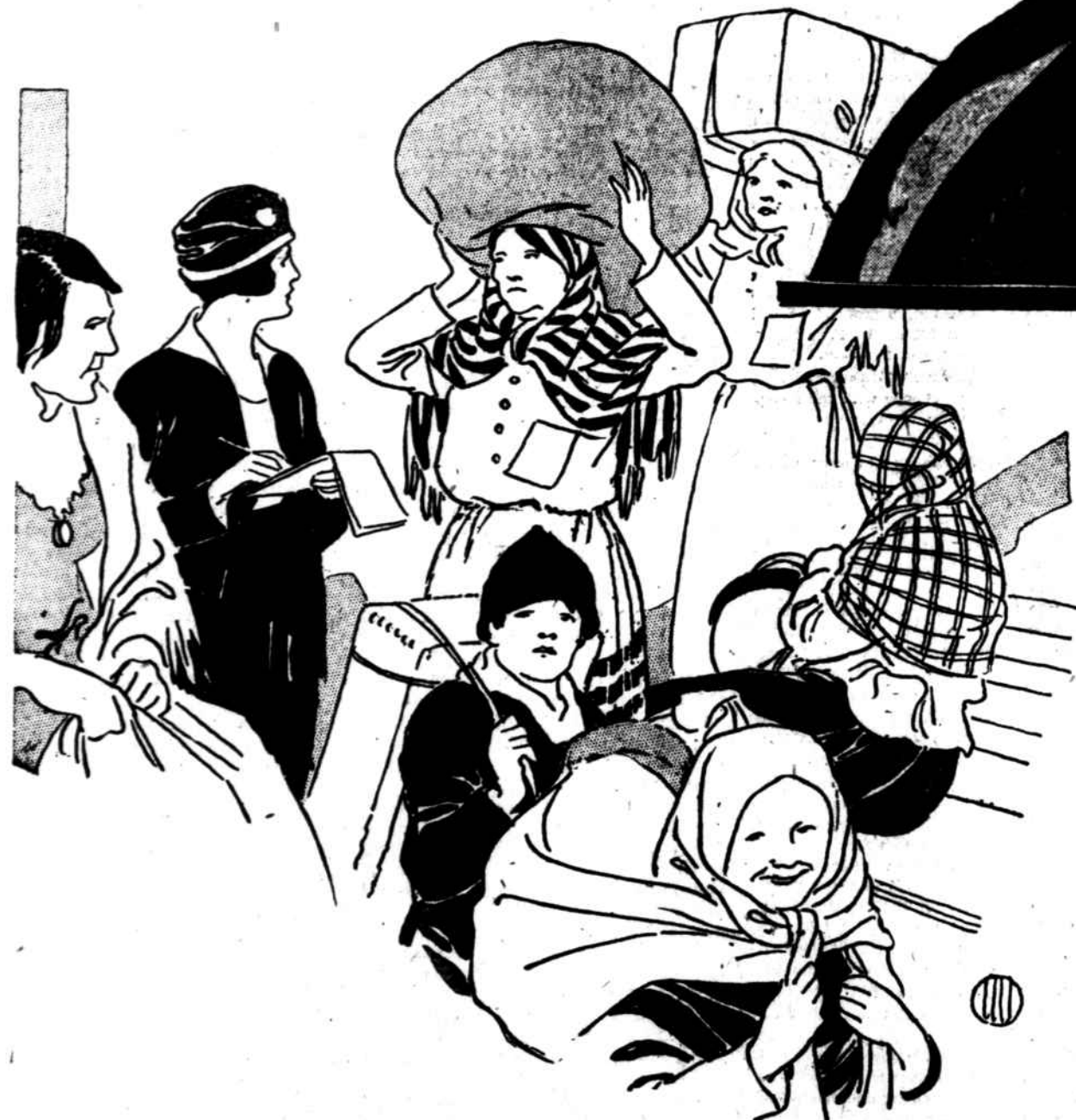
"Will women inspectors be required at all the immigration stations?" I put in.

"Not necessarily. We are at present trying to find out where they are needed, and how many. Memoranda of inquiry on the subject have been addressed to twenty-three districts. Porto Rico reports back that it doesn't want any. Few women come to Porto Rico from foreign lands, though many leave the island for the United States."

investigated and the manifest of the steamship on which she says she arrived is examined to find out whether her name is on the list. It is ascertained whether she has a passport permitting her to leave her own country properly indorsed with the requisite vice of a consul of the United States. If it is found that she evaded inspection, she is deported."

"What is meant by the 'secondary inspection' to which you have alluded?" I inquired.

"The first inspection of arriving aliens is made on board the ship," was the reply. "After they are landed they undergo a second inspection at the immigration station, on what is called the 'registry line,' where the names they give are compared with those on the ship's list, and where they are required to pass the 'literacy test'—meaning that they must be able to read or write in at least one language—to tell where they are going and how much money they have,



of satisfactory work is raised to \$1500. To get one of these jobs, it is necessary to pass an examination, which includes the writing of a report on an imaginary immigration case from data furnished by the examiner, and the answering of practical questions in the immigration and Chinese-exclusion laws and regulations. About forty different languages are spoken by arriving aliens, and ability to speak and interpret one or more of these would importantly help a candidate."

"It occurs to me," I interrupted, "that matrons already in the service ought to be specially available for such appointments."

"That is exactly the case," said Dr. Herring. "The matrons in most instances have had long experience which should qualify them excellently for work as inspectors. Because of the usefulness of this experience, preference is to be given to them in making the appointments, and many of them will soon become full-fledged in-

cut-and-dried routine has been followed. This applies particularly to appeal and deportation cases involving women and children. Henceforth women inspectors will make their own reports in such cases to the secretary of labor, who is the final authority."

"An inspector acts in a judicial capacity. If he says that an alien shall be admitted, the matter is settled. If his decision is adverse, an appeal may be made to the secretary of labor. Such appeals are referred to a board of appeal in the Bureau of Immigration at Washington, which prepares for the secretary a summary of the facts in each case. It is my business to prepare such summaries in cases where women are involved."

"One of the most important duties of the women inspectors will be to conduct special investigations. Suppose, for instance, that an alien woman in the city of Philadelphia is found applying for charitable aid or that she turns up in the criminal courts. It is a matter for suspicion. The question